
3B

Information/Action

Executive Committee

Selection of Advisory Panels

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents the Commission's current policy concerning the process for the selection of individuals to serve on panels and design teams. Committee members will review the role and responsibility of panels and design teams.

Recommended Action: That the Executive Committee review its policy concerning the role and responsibility of panels and design teams.

Presenters: Beth Graybill, Director of Professional Services.

Strategic Plan Goal: 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation of professional educators.
- ◆ Assess and monitor the efficacy of the Accreditation System, Examination System, and State and Federal Funded Programs.

Selection of Advisory Panels

Introduction

This agenda item presents information about the role of advisory panels and design teams in the Commission's work and discusses current policy concerning the selection of individuals to serve on advisory panels.

The Commission and its staff consult with panels in considering policy options. This practice enables the Commission to gain insights and perspectives from groups of persons whose views are varied and backgrounds are diverse. Further, consulting with panels supplements the expertise of staff on complex policy matters such as subject matter knowledge, language proficiency, and psychometrics. Finally, consulting with panels enables stakeholders who are responsible for administering the Commission's policies and constituents who are affected by those policies to be engaged in the policy formation process and assist in the implementation of new policy directions.

The term "panel" refers to a group of individuals that provide insight, advice and perspective on functions such as product development (i.e., examination, standards, and guideline development), implementation and accountability (i.e., program review, accreditation, and examination validation), and research and policy development (i.e., reading study and accreditation pilot project). Design teams, work groups, and task forces are also considered to be panels.

In any given year, the Commission staff work with a number of panels on a variety of technical matters or policy issues including:

- Development of new subject matter requirements or standards for credentials
- Development of new examinations and/or assessments
- Validation or revalidation of examinations and/or assessments and the development of new test items
- The development of passing standards for examinations
- The maintenance of bias-free examinations and assessments
- Addressing policy issues such as the review of the *Accreditation Framework*
- The review of specific certification policies such as bilingual or special education
- Responding to policy concerns raised by stakeholders

In addition, the Commission staff work with teams of professional educators who review program proposals submitted in response to adopted standards (including the review of undergraduate subject matter programs) and who conduct institutional reviews during accreditation visits. The appointment of individuals to accreditation review teams has not been

under the Commission's panel policy. Under the provisions of the current *Accreditation Framework*, the Executive Director of the Commission maintains a pool of trained reviewers who conduct institutional reviews during accreditation visits. The Committee on Accreditation establishes criteria for membership in the pool, known as the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR). The appointment of individuals who review program proposals submitted in response to adopted standards has not been under the Commission's panel policy.

Current Policy

The Policy Manual adopted by the Commission in January 2004 includes a policy that addresses the role and responsibility of panels and design teams. Specifically, Section 490 of the Policy Manual reads as follows:

The Executive Director may establish and appoint an advisory panel, task force, or design team when either staff or the Commission has determined that they require additional expertise, viewpoints, or experiences to obtain further input in the formulation or resolution of a complex issue under consideration. Staff will be responsible for summarizing the work and conclusions of any group, so appointed, in a report to the Executive Director.

In working with panels, staff are guided by the Commission's Policy Manual. The Commission's *Panel Policy and Procedures Guide* provides the following guidance to staff who consult with panels:

The *Guide* requires the selection of panelists to adhere to the following criteria:

- When a panel is established to address an issue that potentially affects diverse constituencies, its membership reflects the diversity of the affected constituencies
- When a panel is set up to examine a problem that is partially technical and specialized, some of the panel members shall be appointed for their technical expertise.

The *Guide* provides the following directions to staff concerning the selection of individuals to serve on panels:

1. As directed by the Executive Director, staff shall solicit nominations from the appropriate organizations, institutions, agencies, individuals, and members of the public. Each organization, institution, and agency shall be strongly encouraged to submit more than one nominee. Nominators and nominees shall be informed that being nominated is not a guarantee of appointment to the panel in question.
2. The Executive Director shall send each nominee a written inquiry regarding the nominee's willingness to serve, background qualifications, and reasons for wishing to serve.

3. Under the Executive Director's direction, staff shall compile and evaluate information regarding the qualifications of nominees who have expressed a willingness to serve.
4. The Executive Director shall select panel members from the pool of nominees who are willing to serve, and shall appoint them to the panel.
5. Staff will notify the individuals appointed to serve on the panel by letter of invitation from the Executive Director. The letter will include such information as:
 - Project scope and limitations, tasks, deadlines and milestones
 - Responsibilities and expectations
 - Contact person
 - Beginning/end date of project

New Directions

The current policy concerning the role and responsibility of panels and design teams delegates certain responsibilities to the Executive Director and staff. What concerns do members of the Commission have with the present policy? What changes, if any, should be made to strengthen the policy? Should the Commission's Panel Policy also address the appointment of individuals to who review program proposals submitted in response to adopted standards, including the review of undergraduate subject matter programs?